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## JUNE, 1972 & A CHIEF WHO DOES NOT COMMAND:

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"Primitive society has always been considered a place of absolute difference in relation to western society, a strange and unthinkable space of absence – absence of all that constitutes the observers' socio-cultural universe: a world without hierarchy, people who obey no one, a society indifferent to possession of wealth, chiefs who do not command, cultures without morals for they are unaware of sin, classless societies, societies without a State, etc. In short, what the writings of ancient travelers or modern scholars constantly cry out and yet never manage to say is that primitive society is, in its being, undivided."<sup>1</sup> – Pierre Clastres, *Archaeology of Violence*

### /0/. A Permanent Exercise in the Decolonization of Thought

In June of 1972, Pierre Clastres participated in a roundtable discussion on *Anti-Oedipus*, where Deleuze and Guattari were present as respondents. After a long period of questions and criticisms from other participants (through which Clastres remained silent) he interrupted the conversation with this striking claim: "Deleuze and Guattari have written about Savages and Barbarians what ethnologists up to now have not."<sup>1</sup> Now, given the ethos of the French philosophical scene at this time such laudatory remarks tend to suggest a tinge of irony if not a complete lack of seriousness.<sup>2</sup> However, if there is something serious intended by this claim it is due to a shared assumption by Clastres and D&G; namely, that true philosophical and anthropological thinking must become a "permanent exercise in the decolonization of thought."<sup>3</sup>

For Clastres, this means acknowledging and addressing the covert forms of eurocentrism that persist within the epistemic framework of anthropology. Thus, what was signaled by the remark with which we began is something like the truth of the socio-political embeddedness of the knowing-subject: it is the ethnographer's and anthropologist's subject matter that obliges them to enter into a relation with that 'unthinkable space of absence'; the absence of all those social cues and normative values that render European social life as an intelligible and lived reality. If the ethnographer can successfully excise these dogmatic presuppositions (as Clastres thinks is possible and as we will see below) they wouldn't merely benefit from a certain level of epistemic certainty about their subject matter. Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, one would understand the positive reason for why certain societies are without States: namely, that non-State societies have intentionally constructed an entire way

of living that is antithetical to State capture. In Clastres' words, they are societies against the State.

For Deleuze, we see a similar notion as early as *Difference and Repetition* regarding the nature of 'social Ideas' and constructing a Thought that is adequate to Ideas themselves:

"In short, the economic is...the totality of the problems posed to a given society. In all rigour, there are only economic social problems, even though the solutions may be juridical, political, or ideological, and the problems may be expressed in these fields of resolvability...Not that the observer can draw the least optimism from this, for these 'solutions,' may involve stupidity or cruelty, the horror of war or 'the solution of the Jewish problem'."4

For Clastres, as with Deleuze (with and without Guattari), attaining a Thought that is adequate to its Idea does not guarantee the moral virtue, or constitute the innocence and objectivity, of the thinker: the Idea may clarify the various fields of resolution to the economic problem but the Idea does not legislate its outcomes due to some innate moralizing logic of establishing an equivalence between a problem and its resolution.<sup>5</sup> Thus, in order to understand the points of convergence between these thinkers we'll begin with an explication of Clastres' analysis of the function of war and violence in what he calls 'Primitive' societies.<sup>6</sup> Then, we will turn to Deleuze and Guattari's chapter on Nomadology in order to see how Clastres' ideas inform their understanding of the nomadic war machine and the State. Finally, we will conclude by developing some of the main consequences regarding the differences in how Clastres and Deleuze and Guattari define the nomadic war machine, how Deleuze and Guattari break from Clastres' analysis, and the significance of this break in how the latter understand what is truly revolutionary in politics and what is revolutionary in society as it presently exists.

### **/1/. War Is 'The Pure and Social Form of Violence'**

In order to address the limits and errors of anthropology, Pierre Clastres resurrects the question of the role of violence and warfare in non-State societies. For Clastres, the question of war has marked the internal limit of various anthropological accounts – where this limit is constituted by the inability to understand warfare from the perspective of non-State groups. Historically, war in societies without a State has continuously been 'accounted for' by its reduction to something other than itself (as a mere doubling of biological aggression; as the struggle over the scarcity of resources; or as the symptom of an unsuccessful transaction between two different social groups).<sup>7</sup> While each account of war is academically significant for Clastres, it is the exchangist framework of Lévi-Strauss that is given the closest treatment since it is via structural anthropology that we are closest to, and yet farthest from, alleviating ourselves of the eurocentric horizon of anthropological study. Thus, Clastres cites the following passage from the *Elementary Structures of Kinship* as emblematic of this exchangist perspective:

"...in Lévi-Strauss's great sociological work, *Elementary Structures of Kinship*, at the end of one of the most important chapters, "The Principle of Reciprocity": [Lévi-Strauss writes] "There is a link, a continuity, between hostile relations and the provision of reciprocal prestations: exchanges are peacefully resolved wars, and wars are the result of unsuccessful transactions.""8

Thus, according to Lévi-Strauss, war in pre-State societies is what happens when the diplomatic exchange between autonomous social groups fails. However, says Clastres, Lévi-Strauss's assertion that exchange is logically prior to war cannot obtain for two main reasons. First, drawing on the work of anthropologist Marshall Sahlins<sup>9</sup>, exchange does not precede war in pre-State societies due to Sahlins' discovery that the true basis of non-state societies was predicated on an economy of abundance as opposed to economies of scarcity. Given this economic relationship between non-state societies and their territorial milieu the logical relationship between exchange and violence appears as suspicious; if for no other reason than the unquestioned assumptions Clastres finds at the heart of the the exchangist hypothesis:

"One would assume, all things being equal for all local groups, a general absence of violence: it could only arise in rare cases of territorial violation; it would only be defensive, and thus never produce itself, each group relying on its own territory which it has no reason to leave."<sup>10</sup>

Thus, Clastres wonders, what motivates the exchange among social groups when each group, due to abundance and surplus, is materially and economically self-sufficient? That is, how can Lévi-Strauss posit the logical priority of exchange over war if exchange appears as superfluous from the perspective of each social groups relative autonomy and natural condition of affluence?

It is for this reason, says Clastres, that we need to understand that it is not exchange that explains war, but it is war that gives rise to exchange among different non-State social groups. In other words, war is not the negative side of the positive definition of non-State societies. Rather, war constitutes one of the fundamental and positive features of non-State societies as such. If war is given logical priority over exchange it is not simply because war comes before peace; rather, war is given logical priority due to the autonomous, autarkic, and self-sufficient desire of societies without a State. As Clastres writes

"At its actual level of existence...primitive society presents two essential sociological properties that touch upon its very being: the social being that determines the reason for being and the principle of the intelligibility of war. The primitive community is at once a totality and a unity. A totality in that it is a complete, autonomous, whole ensemble,

ceaselessly attentive to preserving its autonomy: a society in the full sense of the word. A unity in that its homogenous being continues to refuse social division, to exclude inequality, to forbid alienation. Primitive society is a single totality in that the principle of its unity is not exterior to it: it does not allow any configuration of One to detach itself from the social body in order to represent it, in order to embody it as unity. This is why the criterion of non-division is fundamentally political: if the savage chief is powerless, it is because society does not accept power separated from its being, division, established between those who command and those who obey."<sup>11</sup>

What gives non-State societies their 'reason for being' is simultaneously the relative abundance of nature and the political aim of the autonomous self-determination of each social group for-themselves. It is here that we encounter the economic and political reason for constructing a society without a State: not only is non-State society self-sufficient economically but it is also self-determinant politically. What is implied in Clastres' analysis is not only the necessary corrective to the eurocentric practices of anthropology and ethnography;<sup>12</sup> additionally, implied here is the claim to the existence of a socio-political intentionality on the part of non-State societies. Thus, it is not enough to say the nomads lack a State and thus lack (civil) society. What Clastres demonstrates is that the nomad finds nothing of value in being assimilated into the State apparatus itself; and this lack of value attributed to assimilation from the perspective of non-State social groups is, in itself, a socio-political prescription. Hence Clastres' well known formula of non-State societies as not simply being without a State; rather, they are social wholes fundamentally against the State. Thus, one of the fundamental features of non-State societies; one of their positive definitions; is the intentional organization of a society that seeks to ward off integration into the State apparatus.

But what does this mean for war as the other positive determination of societies against the State? Given what has been said, war must now be understood as the social and political mechanism by which each autonomous social group ensures its autonomy relative to all neighboring groups. When Clastres characterizes war in non-State societies as the 'pure and social form of violence' we must understand two things. First, war in its pure form, is never something embarked upon for-itself or for the purposes of simply eliminating a rival group; war is not the object of nomadic society. Rather, it is the means by which the autarkic principle (the true objective of nomadic society) is preserved at each step of the way. War, as the social form of violence, responds to the problems we encountered with Lévi-Strauss's exchange account. If war in its pure form is understood to be the means to secure the political desire for autonomy relative to all rivaling non-State groups, war in its social form is the cause of, or the sufficient reason for, exchange to take place. Why? Because, says Clastres, one never wages war without acquiring the means for a successful campaign. For non-State societies the means for success are not simply economic or technological; rather, each social group "is resigned to alliance because it would be too dangerous to engage in military operations alone, and that, if one could, one would gladly do without allies who are never absolutely reliable. There is, as a result, an essential property of international life in primitive society: war relates first to alliance; war as an institution determines alliance as a tactic [...] We see now that seeking an alliance depends on actual war: there is sociological priority of war over alliance. Here, the true relationship between exchange and war emerges. Indeed, where are relations of exchange established, which socio-political units assume a principle of reciprocity? These are precisely the groups implicated in the networks of alliance; exchange partners are allies, the sphere of exchange is that of alliance. This does not mean, of course that were it not for alliance, there would no longer be exchange; exchange would simply find itself circumscribed within the space of the autonomous community at the heart of which it never ceases to operate; it would be strictly intra-communal. Thus, one exchanges with allies; there is exchange, because there is alliance."<sup>13</sup>

War as 'the pure and social form of violence' is finally revealed as it exists within non-State societies: as the means by which each rival group ensures their relative autonomy from all other groups<sup>14</sup> and as the basis on which alliances are formed and exchanges made. Thus Clastres writes, and in a manner reminiscent of Deleuze and Guattari, that to understand the function of war and violence in non-State societies necessarily means to understand that "[A]s long as there is war, there is autonomy: this is why war cannot cease, why it must not cease, why it is permanent...the logic of primitive society is a centrifugal logic, a logic of the multiple. The Savages want the multiplication of the multiple."<sup>15</sup>

At this point it is worth recalling Deleuze and Guattari's own attempt to properly pose the question of what defines the nomad/nomadic existence in relation to the life of the migrant: "The nomad has a territory; he follows customary paths...But the question is what in nomad life is a principle and what is only a consequence."<sup>16</sup> War is the principle on which nomadic life is predicated; of life in societies against the State; and exchange is merely the consequence of the tactical alliances established in this permanent war of 'multiplying the multiple', or of ensuring the relative autarky of nomadic social groups as such. And in line with Clastres' positive determination of war in non-State societies, Deleuze and Guattari write, "Primitive war does not produce the State any more than it derives from it. And it is no better explained by exchange than by the State...war is what limits exchange, maintains them in the framework of 'alliances'; it is what prevents them from becoming a State factor, from fusing groups."<sup>17</sup>

## **/2/. The Nomadic War Machine Contra State-Capture**

Now we are in a better position to interrogate Deleuze and Guattari's various claims about the war machine and its relation to the State<sup>18</sup>; that war is against the State<sup>19</sup>; the war machine is an exteriority and the State an interiority<sup>20</sup>; the State is sovereignty<sup>21</sup> and its concern is to conserve a certain organization of power relations<sup>22</sup>; and so on. For Deleuze and Guattari, one of the recurring themes that is explored through their references to Clastres' work in Chapters 12 and 13 of *A Thousand Plateaus* is the historical antagonism between non-State and State forms and the politico-economic sovereignty each implies. That is to say,

then, Deleuze and Guattari do not speak about the civil war of the nomads against State-capture to simply valorize a permanent and savage war against the idyllic order of civil society for-itself. Rather, the nomad and the State allow us to establish a continuum of the differing ways in which political and economic power is distributed, and how it can potentially circulate, ossify, transform, and be commandeered by internal or external forces under certain social and determinate conditions. In other words, the nomadic war machine and the State apparatus of capture are two objective tendencies; of deterritorialization and reterritorialization, respectively; that coexist in any ordering of society.<sup>23</sup> Thus, Deleuze and Guattari write, "...the integration of the nomad into the State is a vector traversing nomadism from the very beginning, from the first act of war against the State."<sup>24</sup>

It is for this reason that Deleuze and Guattari treat the State as an endogenous and exogenous feature of non-State societies and the nomadic war machine as the anticipation and warding off of State capture. In other words, the State can arise from within a group or come from the outside in variable forms (colonialism, primitive accumulation, conquest, invasion, etc.). To ward off the State-as-internal threshold of every non-State formation, political authority is continuously mobile and distributed amongst the members of the group. In those social formations whose aim it is to ward off the State, positions of power are always made relative to the social group as a whole. Hence Clastres' example of the chief whose only means of maintaining political authority is through prestige<sup>25</sup>; or Deleuze and Guattari's treatment of bands, packs, and groups where there is a 'perpetual blackmail' on those who possess a certain amount of power and where this minimal degree of sovereignty can dissolve at any moment. This nomadic-social distribution of sovereign power seeks to ensure that power never stays in one's hands long enough for it to become a force that re-centers/captures nomadic societies relations to serve ends other than the group considered as a whole.

By contrast, in those instances where the State manifests as an exogenous possibility to the nomad, the war machine has war only as the means to ward off State-capture. In any case, whether the State is considered as endogenous or exogenous possibility of non-State societies, the nomadic war machine encounters war as its supplement in its ultimate goal of ensuring autarkic and autonomous collective self-determination. Thus, when Deleuze and Guattari characterize the State as an overcoding, reterritorializing, apparatus of capture, it is precisely because whether considered as an endogenous or exogenous feature of social organizations, the capture of the nomad by the State is the effectuation of the reorganization of the political and economic relations of nomadic society and transforms the nomad into an organ for aims established by the State-as-Organism.<sup>26</sup>

### **/3/. The Most Savage Fruit of Alienation<sup>27</sup>**

Despite the revolutionary promise of the nomadic war machines relation to the State, Deleuze and Guattari are quick to note that "...the present situation is highly discouraging. We have watched the war machine grow stronger and stronger...we have seen it assign it as its objective a peace still more terrifying than fascist death."<sup>28</sup> What happened, then, in this long history of the struggle between nomadic war machines and State societies, that solicits the caution of our schizo-philosophers? Quite straightforwardly, it is the construction of the capitalist world market; the emergence of which confronts the nomadic war machine as its most formidable enemy precisely because both the nomad and Capital seek to weaponize the processes of deterritorialization and their lines of flight to effectuate a truly destratified circulation of political sovereignty and economic power. If globally integrated capitalism constitutes one kind of war machine insofar as its moments of reterritorialization fall back onto a more fundamental process of deterritorialization<sup>29</sup> this is due to the capitalist transformation of the function of the State as an apparatus of capture:

"To the extent that capitalism constitutes an axiomatic (production for the market), all States and all social formations tend to become isomorphic in their capacity as models of realization: there is but one centered world market, the capitalist one, in which even the so-called socialist countries participate. Worldwide organization thus ceases to pass "between" heterogenous formations since it assures the isomorphy of those formations. But it would be wrong to confuse isomorphy with homogeneity. For one thing, isomorphy allows and even incites, a great heterogeneity among States (democratic, totalitarian, and especially, "socialist" States are not facades) [...] When international organization becomes the capitalist axiomatic, it continues to imply a heterogeneity of social formations, it gives rise to and organizes its "Third World."<sup>30</sup>

It is here that we see the similarity and difference between the nomadic war machine and capitalism as a worldwide organization of society: namely, the pure war effectuated by nomadic societies is doubled in the pure war effectuated by the capitalist axiomatic of production for the market. Thus, in both instances, the defining tendency of nomadic and capitalist society is one which seeks to retain the qualitative differences that define particular social groups (or, for capitalism, different nation-States). However, capitalism appears as the perfect double of the nomadic war machine in that it has found an other mode for the distribution and circulation of political sovereignty and economic resources that no longer relies on returning the fruits of Capital to the interests of Labor.

Thus, if it was the case with those societies against the State that sovereign power was continuously distributed to avoid its accumulation in the hands of a single individual and the abundance of resources was expended for benefit the group as a whole; the axiomatic of capital (production for the market) supplants and modifies the anti-State forms of sovereign power. Now it is capital that functions as the sovereign insofar as it is the axiomatic of the market that determines how resources, value, and commodities are distributed, and requires a continuous kind of warfare in the form of primitive accumulation for the infinite expansion of capital.<sup>31</sup> In other words, the objective tendency of a deterritorialization that only reterritorializes on itself which



defines the nomadic war machine as such, is actualized in both nomadic groups and capitalism where each actualization presents a means of organizing society, where one actualization necessarily excludes the other: either social relations are nomadically-mediated phenomena, or social relations are market-mediated phenomena. Thus, if it is the case that in non-State societies every kind of relation found therein is mediated by the nomadic-collective interest of the group considered as a whole; it is with the existence of globally integrated capitalism and its appropriation of the war machine that all hitherto existing relations in society are now mediated by the axiomatic (or principles) of the market as such.

And if only to add insult to injury, as Deleuze and Guattari mentioned in the previous passage, the capitalist world market affords nation-States a certain heterogeneous existence and simply requires their isomorphy in their adherence to the capitalist axiomatic as sovereign power and as economic interest. Thus if it was the aim of 'societies against the State' to ward off various forms of instantiated divisions within their social group ('to forbid alienation'), Capital abides by the wishes of non-State societies since political and economic power has moved elsewhere.

To merely be against the State now appears as the most savage fruit of alienation under globally integrated capital since the restitution of political and economic power can no longer simply be achieved within, and/or against, the nation-State itself. It is for these reasons that Deleuze and Guattari will define two kinds of war machines. On the one hand, we have the capitalist world-war machine that makes war its object through the continuation of primitive accumulation; even to the extent that the perpetual war required at the level of anti-State societies is equated with a globalized perpetual peace (via phenomena such as the 'war on terror'). On the other hand, there is the nomadic war machine that encounters war only as its supplement in the midst of its overall project of constructing a smooth space in order to avoid moments of capture, which function according to sovereign-Faciality; and to avoid the ossification of political power which produces a veritable fascism, whether internal or external to social formations as such. Thus, and with emergence of the world wide ecumenical machine of capitalism, it is no longer simply the State that imposes itself upon anti-State social groups in the same way that the Organism imposes a certain order and appropriates the capacities of its organs; now it is Capital as worldwide axiomatic that imposes itself as the Organism that gives a specific order to States and non-State social formations alike.

At this juncture we need to recall the following: it is in the same moment where Deleuze and Guattari find various merits in Clastres' attempts to overcome the eurocentric blindspots internal to anthropological analysis, that they also find Clastres' definite limit. Namely, Clastres' account of societies against State-capture fails at the moment it would need to provide an analysis of how the State emerged in contrast to non-State societies. As they write,

"[T]he more deeply Clastres delved into the problem, the more he seemed to deprive himself of the means of resolving it. he tended to make primitive societies hypostases, self-sufficient entities (he insisted heavily on this point). He made their formal exteriority into a real independence. Thus he remain an evolutionist, and posited a state of nature. Only this state of nature was, according to him, a fully social reality instead of a pure concept, and the evolution was a sudden mutation instead of a development."<sup>32</sup>

Hence, the war machine that was discovered in Clastres' research and the war machine that is evoked in Deleuze and Guattari's references to Clastres undergoes a transformation. No longer is war simply the instance of conflict between State and non-State groups (this conflict is rather one instantiation of the absolute and unconditioned Idea of war itself).<sup>33</sup> Rather, war is understood as the more general, and objective, tendential process that defines any social organization.

It is for these reasons that Deleuze will remark later in his life, and with regards to his project with Guattari, that "we think any society is defined not so much by its contradictions as by its lines of flight, it flees all over the place, and it's very interesting to try and follow the lines of flight taking shape at some particular moment or other."<sup>34</sup> In other words, what is of principle for any social formation, and what only subsequently produces contradictions as its consequence, are the ways in which any ordering of society is subject to individuals, resources, processes, etc., that fail to be exhaustively incorporated into the dominant social order.

Thus, if the orthodox Marxist continues to proclaim that the history of all hitherto society is the history of class struggle, Deleuze and Guattari reply that the history of all hitherto societies is the negotiation of that which can and cannot be adequately incorporated, captured, normalized, and adjusted toward the ends of the political and economic order. And within their universal history of apparatus of capture and lines of flight, Capitalism emerges as a monstrous hybrid between the nomadic distribution of sovereignty and economic abundance characteristic of non-State societies and the colonial and imperial war machine in order to maintain worldwide hegemony. That is, what Capital takes from the nomadic war machine is its aptitude for constructing a Body without Organs where there is a continuous circulation of political sovereignty and economic power while at the same time marrying this nomadic BwO to the order imposed on the organs by the Organism of State-capture. It is at this point in their analysis of Capital that it is worth highlighting their agreement with Marx's characterization of the relationship between Labor and Capital in the Grundrisse. As Marx writes,

"The production process has ceased to be a labour process in the sense of a process dominated by labour as its governing unity. Labour appears, rather, merely as a conscious organ, scattered among the individual living workers at numerous points of the mechanical system [...] In machinery, knowledge appears as alien, external to him; and living labour [as] subsumed under self-activating objectified labour."<sup>35</sup>

In Deleuzo-Guattarian terms, Capital is peculiar since it is a BwO that acts upon its organs in ways that are similar to the

subjugation inflicted by the Organism. It is due to this peculiarity that they write, in a more sober moment, that the war machine has grown stronger only to produce something more terrifying than fascist death: namely, the world war machine of which Capital constructs a BwO that allows the flow and circulation of all of its elements in a productive manner while the very same BwO exploits the productive capacities of its organs for ends other than those elements that constitute the BwO as such.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, and given this relationship between labor-as-organ of capitalism's worldwide Organism, we can reasonably wonder if, on this account of the relationship between nomadism and capitalism, there is some significant difference between Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the Nomad and Marx's concept of Labor. That is, can we justifiably equate this concept of the nomad with the Marxian concept of Labor? Additionally, if Deleuze and Guattari want to remain Marxists, we must also ask if they simply appropriate Marx's understanding of Labor wholesale or if Deleuze and Guattari offer a transformation of the social antagonism as first schematized by Marx himself?

#### **/4/. Between the Revolutionizing Tendencies of Capital and the Revolutionary Praxis of Minorities Exists A World of Difference**

While it may appear as if there is little to no significant difference between the nomad and Labor, it is important to understand that the difference between labor and the nomadic war machine is the difference between Labor, which is understood as the organization of a people along certain lines of flight or certain points of tension within capitalism itself, while the nomadic war machine is simply one of the objective tendencies that defines social formations under specific socio-determinate conditions. Thus, contrary to the apparent identity between the nomad and Labor, we can neither equate Labor nor Capital with the nomadic war machine itself. Rather, Labor and Capital are two qualitatively different attempts to utilize, organize, and weaponize those tendential processes of global society that either seek to push Capital to the point of its radical transformation and towards the realization of global communism; or to continuously establish more axioms that temporarily resolve the crises of Capital through its organs that perpetuate capital's realization of value (legal, juridical, military, political, etc.).

It is for this reason that Deleuze and Guattari write, "[T]he question is therefore less the realization of war than the appropriation of the war machine."<sup>37</sup> Thus the question of the nomad's relationship to Labor is not a question that seeks to establish their essential identity. Rather, the question posed by the nomadic war machine, understood as the various tendencies of deterritorialization within a given social formation, is a socio-economic problem that is posed to both Labor and Capital; where both Labor and Capital are two ways of resolving the socio-economic problems posed to a given society and thus involve qualitatively different appropriations of the nomadic war machine as such.

Thus, there is an important difference between the revolutionary potential of those nomadic tendencies that push social formations toward points of structural transformation and the subsequent politics that ensues given how social formations make use of the variable processes of deterritorialization. Namely, the revolutionary organization of Labor over and against Capital is not simply one of capitalism's 'revolutionizing tendencies' that force capital's ever growing expansion across the globe.<sup>38</sup> Rather, it is the means by which Labor uses the lines of flight that define capitalist society as the grounds for the abolition of capital itself. Thus, what is definitive of revolutionary politics on the one hand, cannot be equated to the revolutionizing tendencies of the capitalist mode of production, on the other; and between a revolutionary tendency and a revolutionary praxis exists an entire future-world of difference.

Thus, if one is to search for a term that serves the same function as Marx's concept of Labor; and if one acknowledges the difference in kind between the revolutionizing tendencies of capitalism and revolutionary politics; one would do better in finding something akin to Labor in Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the minor/minoritarian. As they write:

"The power of minority, of particularity, finds its figure or its universal consciousness in the proletariat. We have often seen capitalism maintain and organize inviable States, according to its needs, and for the precise purpose of crushing minorities. The minorities issue is instead that of smashing capitalism, of redefining socialism, of constituting a war machine capable of countering the world war machine by other means."<sup>39</sup>

Thus, against this common misconception that Deleuze and Guattari privilege deterritorialization for-itself prior to any concrete determination of how society should be globally arranged, what is truly revolutionary according to our authors and what social position in contemporary capitalism possesses the revolutionary force that Marx identified in the relation of Labor to Capital at the end of the nineteenth century, is the manner by which various social groups engage with the revolutionizing tendencies of capital in order to construct a revolutionary political praxis.

For Deleuze and Guattari, it is the minority groups that serve the function of Marx's nineteenth century proletariat; not because the economic conditions that constitute class relations lose their significance. Rather, the minor/minoritarian speaks to the fact that, during the time of their writing, the economic conditions that constitute class relations, and thus the very makeup of the composition of the working class itself, is becoming increasingly a heterogenous composition of marginalized and exploited individuals viz-à-viz globally integrated capital.

#### **/5/. War Machines In The Age Of Capitalist Reproduction**

When we began with the nomads of Clastres who could have predicted that we would end with the nomadic war machines

mutation into the worldwide ecumenical war machine of Capital? Least of all Clastres himself, who would be horrified by capitalism's hybrid BwO that mimics the nomadic distribution of sovereignty and resources while constantly assimilating and/or capturing everyone and everything, which attempts to break free from capital, through the steady addition of capitalist axiomatics. From the present in which Deleuze and Guattari were writing, Capital's BwO appears as the nomadic war machine with its specific mode of circulation and distribution that Clastres' account could never have anticipated. It is precisely for this reason that Deleuze and Guattari remain unsatisfied with Clastres' attempts to define the war machine as something specific to the War (as pure and social form) waged by societies against State capture. To the contrary, it was the nomads who weaponized the process of deterritorialization relative to their determinate social conditions while the war machines themselves are never circumscribed by, and subject to, specific spatio-temporal determination.

It is due to the fact that Clastres' non-State societies can no longer be treated as synonymous with the nomadic war machine (where the nomadic war machine is now understood as the processes of deterritorialization as such); and that the nomadic war machine now appears to find its role and function within Capital's BwO as those various revolutionizing tendencies found within capitalist society; that the conditions for revolutionary politics itself can no longer satisfy itself by simply replicating the lines of flight that move one toward certain thresholds of societal transformation. As we saw, to simply equate revolutionary political praxis with the revolutionizing tendencies of capital only guarantees the continuation of capitalism by other means (military campaigns, the guarantee of political emancipation through a form of human rights that remains compatible with the axiomatic of the capitalist market<sup>40</sup>, etc.).

It is for these reasons that Deleuze and Guattari evoke the minor and minoritarian composition of class constitution under contemporary capitalism; if only to underscore the increasing severity of the means of value extraction that no longer confines itself to the factory. Thus, it is with the criticisms of Clastres, the redefinition of the war machine, and the distinction between tendency and praxis that we, here, recall what Nicholas Thoburn has already so eloquently articulated: what is constitutive of revolutionary praxis (as opposed to tendency) is how minority groups "engage with the 'objective' lines of flight immanent to the social system [...] For Marx and Deleuze and Guattari, capitalism is a radically transformative social system that is premised on lines of flight; it was born through a new means of mobilizing and conjoining flows of money and flows of labour. The essence of capital is that it continually sets free its lines of flight – its made scientists, its countercultures, its warmongers – in order to open new territories for exploitation. It is thus a perpetual process of setting and break limits. Politics is not an assertion of a class or minority identity, but is a process of engagement with these 'objective' lines of flight. Inasmuch as an assemblage 'works' in a social system, its lines of flight are functional to it – they are not in themselves revolutionary. Politics thus seeks to engage with these flows (of people, ideas, relations, and machines in mutual interrelation) and, in a sense, push them further or take them elsewhere, against their immanent reterritorialization in fashions functional to the realization of surplus value. This is why for Marx the communist movement needs to follow a path through the flows of capitalism, not oppose an identity to it, and why Deleuze and Guattari suggest that minorities do not so much create lines of flight, as attach themselves to them (cf. Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 43)."<sup>41</sup>

1. Pierre Clastres, *Archaeology of Violence*, trans. Jeanine Herman, (Semiotext(e): Los Angeles, 2010), p. 259
2. Desert Islands, "Deleuze and Guattari Fight Back...", (Semiotext(e): Los Angeles, 2004), p. 226.
3. For example, consider the puzzlement inflicted upon present day academics by Foucault's provocation that perhaps, one fine day, this century will be Deleuzian.
4. Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *Cannibal Metaphysics*, trans. Peter Skafish (Univocal: Minneapolis, 2014), p. 48
5. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (Columbia University Press: New York, 1994), p. 186
6. There is a much more sophisticated argument behind this specific claim regarding the relationship between Ideas, Thought, and the identity between Ideas and their participants/claimants/copies, etc. Briefly, in Deleuze's immanent critique of the Platonic dialectic, he finds two important features. First, that Plato gave the proper task to Thinking by orienting Thought toward the relationship between claimants and their Idea. Second, Plato's error was in attempting to establish a logical identity between Idea and thing; between a model and its copy. This error is what is repeated throughout the history of philosophy, which assumes that difference can only be thought on the basis of, and through, Identity (A=A). For Deleuze, by contrast, the Platonic Idea is the true object of thought insofar as it lacks the means to provide us with any equivalence between Ideas and things, models and copies. Thus, in a certain sense, what Aristotle criticizes Plato for (by attempting to utilize myth as the mediating term of equivalence) is precisely what Deleuze finds of value in Plato's dialectic. To proceed by problems means, prior to any identity/equivalence, grasping all the differences which lay a claim to the Idea itself. Thus, for Deleuze, Ideas are the true objects of Thought not because it gives us the means of establishing identity-as-reciprocity; where the subject and its predicates are essentially identical. Rather, Ideas are the true objects of Thought because they establish the relation of Identity-as-Inclusion: the subject and its predicates are qualitatively different but cannot be thought separately. Identity-as-Inclusion provides one with the means to think differences-in-themselves, without conflating them with some general or common term.
7. For the purposes of this presentation I have chosen to use the terms non-State and pre-State societies as a substitute for Clastres' more dated terminology of 'Savage' and 'Primitive' society. Also of interest for our purposes: at certain points in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari will call non/pre-State societies 'counter-State societies'.
8. Briefly, the three frameworks breakdown as follows: The Naturalist interpretation accounts for violence/war by reducing its social manifestations to biological necessity: humans are naturally aggressive and in pre-state societies the use of violence is a means for the survival of hunter-gatherers (the hunter does violence, and kills, the hunted animal). The problem here is

that war, then, is seen as the mere double of the necessary violence of the hunter. So war, if it is this very same violence, is the hunting of other humans with the aim of satisfying hunger. However, says Clastres, even the phenomena of cannibalism isn't sufficiently explained by this naturalist framework since it would be easier in the life of non-state societies to hunt non-human animals. The Economist interpretation accounts for violence/war by interpreting war as indicative of the poverty of 'primitive' life; where, due to the underdevelopment of the productive forces (e.g., the lack of technological means for things such as agriculture), war is fought over the scarcity of resources. The Economist position asserts a metaphysical economy of scarcity as the natural precondition of non-state social life. For Clastres, this idea appears to be disproven by the research of Marshall Sahlins whose field work proposes that life in pre-state societies was actually predicated on an economy of an abundance of resources; where the majority of time is understood as leisure-time since the labor-time is reduced to a minimum. The Exchangist framework, which is developed above, is attributed to Lévi-Strauss's thesis that "exchanges are peacefully resolved wars, and wars are the result of unsuccessful transactions."

9. Archaeology of Violence, p. 252-3
10. Marshall Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (Chicago: Aldine-Altherton, Inc., 1972). Sahlins' ethnographic work that discovers abundance and surplus as the true economic infrastructure of pre-State societies is explicated in the first chapter of this text entitled 'The Original Affluent Society.'
11. Archaeology of Violence, p. 258
12. *ibid.*, p. 261, my emphasis. One important implication here is Clastres' equivalence between a divided society and the idea of alienation. Clastres also mentions at an earlier point in the text that bracketing the gendered division of labor within non-State societies, these social formations exist as fundamentally undivided since each member of the social whole is "polyvalent in a way; men know how to do everything men should know how to do, women know how to do everything women should know how to do. No individual is less knowledgeable or less capable; no individual can fall victim to the enterprises of another more talented or better-off." (p. 259).
13. i.e., societies without a State are not in some state of nature but are social wholes that attain a certain degree of economic and political autonomy
14. *ibid.*, p. 267
15. Clastres' phrasing: "the permanence of the dispersion, the parceling, the atomization of groups." *ibid.*, p. 274
16. *ibid.*, p. 274
17. ATP, p. 380, my emphasis.
18. *ibid.*, p. 358, my emphasis.
19. While I have not spent much time in this essay defining the State, as understood by either Clastres or Deleuze and Guattari, it is important to understand that the basic features of the State are the overcoding of pre-existent codes; reterritorialization of the smooth space of nomadic life; the consolidation of power along the vertical axis of sovereign-Facility as opposed to the continuous distribution of sovereign power among the members of a group. So in other words the State 'captures' nomadic life and this 'capture' means the reorganization of the political and economic relations of nomadic society and transforms the nomad into an organ for aims established by the State-as-Organism. And it is on the basis of these contrasting features of non-State and State societies that we can understand Deleuze and Guattari's remark from the Facility chapter: "European racism as the white man's claim has never operated by exclusion, or by the designation of someone as Other: it is instead primitive societies that the stranger is grasped as an "Other". From the viewpoint of racism, there is no exterior; there are no people on the outside. There are only people who should be like us and whose crime it is not to be", *ibid.*, p. 178.
20. "the State was against war, so war is against the State.", *ibid.*, p. 357.
21. "The exteriority of the war machine is also attested to by ethnology", *ibid.*, p. 357.
22. "The State is sovereignty. But sovereignty only reigns over what it is capable of internalizing, of appropriating locally", *ibid.*, p. 360.
23. "The concern of the State is to conserve", *ibid.*, p. 357.
24. However, this is not to say that non-State societies and societies with State-forms are simply the appearance of a more fundamental tendency of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. Rather, non-State and State societies are two actualizations of these tendencies. However, and this will become important for Deleuze and Guattari as this essay progresses, we risk falling into a certain trap by simply treating non-State societies as synonymous with the nomadic war machine as such and treating State societies as synonymous with some practical ossification of power that exists as an exogenous factor to social formations.
25. *ibid.*, p. 420.
26. "the chief, who has no instituted weapon other than his prestige, no other means of persuasion, no other rule than his sense of the group's desires." *ibid.*, p. 357.
27. Most importantly, it is by understanding how State capture constitutes precisely this relation of the nomad-as-organ and the State-as-Organism, that we can comprehend the specificity of the kind of systemic oppression effectuated through processes of normalization. For Deleuze and Guattari, this is most transparent in the emergence of European colonialism and its systemic institution of racism: "European racism as the white man's claim has never operated by exclusion, or by the designation of someone as Other: it is instead primitive societies that the stranger is grasped as an "Other". From the viewpoint of racism, there is no exterior; there are no people on the outside. There are only people who should be like us and whose crime it is not to be", *ibid.*, p. 178.
28. I am indebted to Andrew Culp for this specific phrasing from his review essay 'The Savage Fruit of Alienation,' <http://theanvilreview.org/print/the-savage-fruit-of-alienation/>
29. *ibid.*, p. 422.
30. "With the nomad, on the contrary, it is deterritorialization that constitutes the relation to the earth, to such a degree that the nomad reterritorializes on deterritorialization itself", *ibid.*, p. 381.
31. *ibid.*, p. 436-7.

32. Or, if one prefers retaining the Hegelian terms familiar to Marx, we might say that Capital is both in-itself and for-itself.
33. *ibid.*, p. 359.
34. "the nomad war machine does not appear to us to be one case of real war among others, as in Clausewitz, but on the contrary the content adequate to the Idea, the invention of the Idea, with its own objects, space, and composition of the nomos," *ibid.*, p. 420.
35. Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations*, trans. Martin Joughin, (Columbia University Press: New York, 1995), p. 171.
36. Karl Marx *Grundrisse*, trans. Martin Nicolaus, (Penguin: New York, 1973), pp. 693-5.
37. Regarding Deleuze and Guattari's treatment of the State as it relates to globally integrated capitalism, it is important to highlight Eugene Holland's text *Nomad Citizenship*, since Holland develops the concept of what he terms the 'Death-State' as the concept through which we can understand the recent developments of late capital and the political and economic transformations this has for the existence of the nation-State. For Holland, while it remains true that neoliberalism continuously curtails the influence of nation-States on the global economy it is equally true that the repressive function of the State has been on the rise, and for no accidental reason. "The Death-State entails the violence of permanent war, conducted, as we have seen, to produce both surplus-value for an important sector of capital and surplus power for the neo-despotic State-along with the abject submission in its citizens [...] State power thus derives not just from being in the position to decide and declare who is friend and who is enemy but from being in the position to demand the ultimate sacrifice: to give one's life for one's country. Because of this demand, the Death-State enjoys a monopoly not only on violence but also on citizenship, on people's sense of belonging and the degree and kind of their investment in social groups" (*Nomad Citizenship*, p. 62). For more see Eugene W. Holland, *Nomad Citizenship: Free-Market Communism and the Slow-Motion General Strike*, (Minnesota University Press: Minneapolis, 2011), pp. 31-63.
38. ATP, p. 420.
39. This is the political valence of their well known statement that we should never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us; *ibid.*, p. 500.
40. *ibid.*, p. 472
41. As Deleuze and Guattari write "Human rights are axioms. They can coexist on the market with many other axioms, notably those concerning the security of property, which are unaware of or suspend them even more than they contradict them... Rights save neither men nor philosophy that is reterritorialized on the democratic State. Human rights will not make us bless capitalism." Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchill, (Verso: New York, 2009), p. 107.
42. Nicholas Thoburn, *Deleuze, Marx and Politics*, (Routledge: New York, 2003), p. 29.

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